

UTAP

AGENDA ITEM 4 - ATTACHMENT 1

Universal Trail Assessment Process

Breaking News...

UTAP re-designed for the 21st Century

Check out the **new and improved** trail assessment process
- UTAP 2000! -

It's more streamlined, universal and suitable for diverse trail environments.

Also Inside:

- **Craters of the Moon Receives Award for Trail Signage**
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- **Upcoming UTAP Trainer Course in June 2003**
- **...and more!!**

Providing access, mapping, usage, and maintenance information

UTAP for the 21st Century

Have you heard of **UTAP 2000**?

The Universal Trail Assessment Process (UTAP) is now new and improved. Originally developed in 1995, the UTAP has been dramatically revised for the 21st Century. Data collection has been **streamlined and expanded** to create a **universal assessment strategy for all paths of travel in outdoor environments** (e.g., recreation trails, access routes, shared use paths). The UTAP is now **faster and easier** to do and provides information on trail maintenance, conservation, construction, mapping, level of access, interpretation, and use. **UTAP 2000 information is now primarily designed to benefit land managers** by providing them with objective information about the conditions on their trails. Land managers can also use the information to better inform trail users of the conditions that they will encounter through the dissemination of Trail Access Information.

UTAP 2000 differs significantly from the original process because it is:

- **Streamlined**
Basic UTAP 2000 data collection (grade, cross slope, surface, width, and features) can now be **completed at a slow walking pace, by a team of two or three people**. The time required depends on the trail conditions and level of detail desired by the land manager. Trails with consistent

conditions are faster to assess than those in difficult, constantly changing terrain. Managers who want to collect very detailed information (e.g. construction methods and materials, detailed sign and facility inventories, documentation of specific species) can do so, but at a slower speed.

- **Universal**
UTAP 2000 has been redesigned to meet all of the data collection needs of land management agencies. Gone is the sole focus on accessibility. The **new focus is objective trail information** that can be used for any trail-related work, including conservation, environmental monitoring, accessibility, planning, design, mapping, interpretation, user access and safety, construction and maintenance.
- **Diverse**
The "standard" **UTAP 2000** procedures are designed for unpaved, front-country recreation trails. "Modified" **UTAP 2000** procedures have been designed for a range of applications, including shared use paths, back-country recreation trails, long-distance trails, trail maintenance and construction planning, and new trail layout.

How can **UTAP 2000** information be used?

The Universal Trail Assessment Process can be used to:

- Create a standardized record of existing trail conditions and maintenance needs.

- Monitor specific trail features to enhance planning/budgeting of trail needs.
- Balance access and barrier removal with conservation of the natural resource.
- Provide information that enhances the safety of all trail users (i.e., not just hikers).
- Enhance user enjoyment through the selection of trails appropriate to individual skills, interests and experience.

Why create **UTAP 2000**, a universal assessment strategy for outdoor paths of travel? Originally, the UTAP was developed with funding from the National Institutes of Health specifically to determine the level of access on recreation trails for people with disabilities. The focus was solely on accessibility, primarily for people using wheelchairs. As we worked on UTAP implementation with a wide variety of land management agencies we received a lot of feedback about the potential benefits of an objective assessment process. Our land management partners educated us about the need for reliable, objective information for a variety of issues such as conservation, construction, maintenance, mapping, interpretation, budget preparation, and trail planning and design. They also helped us to understand more clearly the resource limitations (both staff and materials) that influence trail work. We also received valuable input from a broad range of disability organizations that, along with our own research, more clearly identified the level of detail required to enable trail users to



Taking trail measurements

make informed decisions about trail access. Finally, through the people we had trained to do the UTAP measurements we learned that it could be applied to any path of travel in an outdoor environment. Based on the knowledge and experience gained over the first five years we realized that the benefits of the UTAP could be substantially increased with the adoption of a universal approach. Significant work over the past three years has resulted in **UTAP 2000**, a universal assessment strategy for outdoor paths of travel. **Many, many thanks to all those who helped expand the UTAP horizons!**

What are people saying about UTAP 2000?

UTAP 2000 has received tremendous support, particularly from people who learned the original UTAP between 1995-

1999 and realize the changes that have taken place. Hugh Osborne, with the National Park Service Rivers, Trails & Conservation Assistance Program in Denver, attended a UTAP Update Clinic at the National Trails Symposium, and had these comments:

"The UTAP is a remarkable tool to fully assess trails and provides all the information users and managers need. The UTAP information is more useful to the field manager than other assessment tools such as Maximo. The refinements to the UTAP have made the process more accurate and easier to use, as well as easier for people to learn and understand what is measured and how to do the measurements. The UTAP measures what is actually on the ground and provides objective information for users to decide if the trail is accessible for them."

The creation and improvement of the TrailWare software makes recording and displaying the assessment data a breeze. In the last year, more people are asking for and even demanding the information and data that are provided by the UTAP."

Karl Knapp, California Parks and Recreation – Sierra District, who uses and teaches the UTAP comments:

"Being involved with UTAP since the early 1990's we see UTAP as more than a valuable trail assessment tool that provides core data for our agency and our users. The UTAP process centralizes design criteria that are required for all outdoor recreation pathways and trail issues. Surfacing, obstructions, grades and clearances are core design values that need to be incorporated into all outdoor recreation situations the California Department of Parks and Recreation deal with. The UTAP process helps institutionalize these design values in everyday maintenance and rehabilitation of pathways and trails."

Art Needleman, with the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service in New Mexico recently updated his knowledge of the UTAP when attending the UTAP Trainer Course and had these comments:

"The benefits of UTAP are two-fold. Land management agencies are able to measure and assess trails with the final result being information that is clear and accurate to all levels of users. Secondly, land

management agencies are able to use the same information as a means to determine short-term and long-term maintenance needs, usually before a problem becomes a major expenditure. The newer approach to UTAP broadens the scope of benefits to all users, and presents more usable information on trails."

How do I know if I learned the new and improved UTAP?

The UTAP has been in a process of refinement since its creation in 1995. The newest version of the UTAP Training Guide (© 2002) provides the details of the **UTAP 2000** approach and measurement

techniques. If you attended a UTAP Coordinator Workshop in the last couple of years (e.g., 2000 or later) then you are ready to assess trails using **UTAP 2000**, a universal assessment strategy for outdoor paths of travel.

Want to learn more about UTAP 2000?

A variety of opportunities are available to help you learn and apply **UTAP 2000**.

- Details of the assessment procedures are available in the **Universal Trail Assessment Process Training Guide** (©2002).

- A 5-hour **UTAP Update Clinic** is available to individuals who attended the original UTAP Coordinator Workshops.
- **UTAP Coordinator Workshops** continue to be offered throughout North America.

Check the American Trails website (www.americantrails.org) for training dates and locations or contact Beneficial Designs for more information at (831) 429-8447 ext 113 or send an email to <trails@beneficialdesigns.com>.

Don't live in the past, get all the benefits of **UTAP 2000** today!

Are Your Surfaces Firm and Stable?

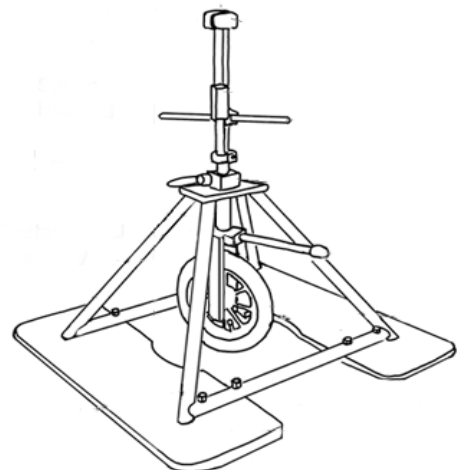
From soil, to grass, to wood chips, to asphalt, in order to be considered accessible, **surfaces must be "firm and stable"**. Firmness is the resistance to a force pushing down on the surface. Stable surfaces do not shift with twisting or sideways forces.

The **Rotational Penetrometer** is the **only portable tool** that objectively measures the firmness and stability of **any surface**. For only \$1,990 plus shipping you can be sure that all of the surfaces in your facility meet the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act. Designed to be lightweight for use on trails, the rotational penetrometer can also be used to assess indoor surfaces such as carpet or tile. The instruction manual provided makes learning to use the rotational penetrometer quick and easy, just:

- Stand on the base
- Place the penetrometer wheel on the surface
- Release the calibrated spring and read the measure of firmness
- Rotate the penetrometer wheel and read the measure of stability

Research, funded by the Access Board, has demonstrated that the Rotational Penetrometer is accurate and reliable. A copy of the research report is included with each Rotational Penetrometer purchased, and information about the performance readings for firm, moderately firm, stable and moderately stable surfaces are also available on the Access Board web site (www.access-board.gov).

Order your Rotational Penetrometer today from Beneficial Designs, tel: (775) 783-8822, fax: (775) 783-8823, email: surfaces@beneficialdesigns.com.



Rotational Penetrometer – a portable tool for measuring the firmness and stability of indoor and outdoor surfaces

Craters of the Moon National Monument Recognized for New TAI Signage

Craters of the Moon National Monument in Arco, Idaho, has been awarded the **National Park Service 2002 National Design Project Achievement Award (Exhibits and Waysides)** for their efforts to provide all visitors, including those with disabilities, with Trail Access Information (TAI) in a variety of formats.

Staff determined that the best place to provide the Trail Access Information was on signs located at each trailhead. The signage provides visitors with information on all eight trails within the developed area of the Monument. Visitors can use this information to determine if a particular trail meets their interests and abilities. Since visitors also need this information for pre-trip planning, published, and electronic versions were also developed.

To develop the signage and information the staff began by using the Universal Trail Assessment Process to conduct assessments of their trails and obtain accurate measurements of grade, cross slope, tread width, surface characteristics, and potential obstructions along the trails. The data were entered into TrailWare for analysis and to develop formats for providing visitor information.

Congratulations to Craters of the Moon for their multi-disciplinary effort to conduct assessments and to design and install signage



Craters of the Moon National Monument - Arco, Idaho

that provides Trail Access Information to all visitors. To see more on the work of Craters of the Moon visit their website at www.nps.gov/crmo/hikingaccess.htm. More information on the award they received is available at http://www.nps.gov/access/awards/exhibits_waysides/2002.htm.

UTAP Products and Services

Just a reminder that a variety of training materials, services and products are available from Beneficial Designs. We can:

- provide you with the personnel to perform a full trail assessment,

- train your staff or volunteers to conduct their own assessments,
- assist you with processing your trail data using TrailWare to create standard Trail Access Information (TAI) and signage, or
- create custom signage for trail head signs, pocket maps, audio trail descriptions or trail guide books.

We also distribute a full trail assessment tool kit along with the individual tools that you may need for performing your trail assessments. The newest addition to our selection of "tools" for conducting trail assessments is the availability of legal-size data collection forms on waterproof (i.e., "write-in-the-rain") paper. Feel free to give us a call in either our Minden (775-783-8822) or our Santa Cruz (831-429-8447) offices. We will be happy to answer any questions you might have regarding ordering or purchasing products. For questions about TrailWare software please contact the Santa Cruz office (831-429-8447). Also feel free to send an email to <trails@beneficialdesigns.com>, and we will route it to the most appropriate team member to respond to your needs.

TrailWare in 2003

Agencies and organizations across the U.S. and Canada, from local volunteer trail groups to large land management agencies, are busy evaluating TrailWare 2.0 to assist Beneficial Designs in developing a user-friendly and efficient software program. Since September 2002 the testers have

been entering and analyzing their own trail data in order to thoroughly evaluate the use of TrailWare under "real world" conditions. TrailWare enables easy entry and analysis of data collected with the Universal Trail Assessment Process. TrailWare also provides reports for trail managers and Trail Access Information for trail users. The success of the beta-evaluations done to date are illustrated by:

- The entry and analysis of data for over 400 trails that are now available on the Trail Explorer (www.trailexplorer.org).
- Creation of Trail Access Information for the trail map of Humber Arboretum in Toronto, Canada.
- Development of Trail Access Information signage for trails at Craters of the Moon National Monument in Arco, Idaho.

Beneficial Designs also has been busy developing new TrailWare modules to provide additional analysis and reporting functions. TrailWare modules currently

under development include:

- Computerized development of a grade profile with surface shading.
- Advanced land manager reporting, including data summary calculations, search and find options, and more advanced reporting and exporting capabilities.
- Guidelines comparison for published accessibility criteria for all types of outdoor paths (e.g., trails, outdoor recreation access routes, accessible routes, beach access routes, shared use paths, public rights of way) and customized comparisons for user-determined criteria.
- Hand-held data entry on-trail with direct download into TrailWare.

TrailWare development and testing will continue at a rapid pace over the next few months as we work towards completion of the research project. **TrailWare will be available FREE** to people who would like to try the software before purchasing. The **120-day**

TrailWare Trail Data Entry

Park List | Park Info | Trail List | **Trail Detail** | Segments | Reports

Trail Name: Pioneer Trail Designation: National Historic Trail
 Park: Morgan Grist Mill Agency: Missouri State Parks
 Destination: Old Morgan City Region: Central
 Dest Type: Historical District: Cavanaugh County
 Development: Fully developed Usage: Medium Type: Linear Age: 32
 Elevation Maximum: 925 Minimum: 879 ft

Length	Typ	Max	Typ	Max	Tread Width	MCW	Min Vert
km	Grade	Grade	X-Slope	X-Slope	cm	in	Obstruction
mi	%	%	%	%			in
1.2	0.7	2.4	2.3	17	138	54	15
						22	6

Trail Info: Pioneer trail goes through a wooded area of Hickory, Maple, and Beech trees. Seasonal wildflowers abundant in the spring and fall.
 Trail Notes: The trail leads to Old Morgan City and Grist Mill.
 Trailhead(s): Parking Lot

Activities	Allowed?	Activities	Allowed?	Environmental Zones
Hiking	Yes			Forest - Temperate
Dogs - On Leash	Yes			
Bicycling	Yes			
Equestrian	No			
Motor Vehicles	No			

Blue shading: Fields exported to Trail Explorer or used in Trail Explorer calculations
 Yellow shading: Calculated fields, also used in Trail Explorer
 Red buttons: Warning - required station data is missing

The Trail Detail screen allows for narrative trail information to be entered.

trial version will allow agencies, organizations, and individuals to “test drive” TrailWare before they buy. For more information on obtaining a 120-day evaluation version of TrailWare contact <trails@beneficialdesigns.com>.

UTAP Trainer Recertification?

Calling all UTAP Trainers! We want to know what you think!

Many UTAP Trainers have raised the issue of trainer recertification. Ultimately they ask, “What do we have to do to remain certified as a UTAP Trainer?” They have also made a wide variety of recommendations related to the issue of trainer. Ultimately, the key benefit of using UTAP to create and disseminate Trail Access Information is the availability of standardized, reliable information about on-trail conditions. Our ability to ensure the accuracy and reliability of Trail Access Information rests with the quality of the UTAP Coordinator Workshops and, therefore, with the people who lead these training opportunities. The fundamental question is:

How can we ensure that UTAP Trainers have the most up-to-date knowledge?

If you are a UTAP Trainer (Level 1, 2 or 3), we want to hear from you! **Let us know whether or not you think that UTAP Trainers should be required to re-certify on a regular basis.** If you think that they should re-certify regularly, let us know:

- How often?

- What actions or additional training or experience should be required?

Suggestions that we have already received include:
Teaching a minimum of one UTAP Coordinator Workshop or

Assessing a minimum of one mile of trail or

Attending a trail-related conference or symposium or
Completing a written renewal examination.

- What fees are you willing to pay to cover the processing cost of recertification?.
- What status would trainers who don't re-certify have?
Inactive status – to be re-activated upon completion of renewal or co-teaching a workshop
Former status – not currently recognized.

Send your thoughts, comments and suggestions on the issue of UTAP Trainer to Beneficial Designs, **no later than May 15, 2003.**

Does your playground surface meet accessibility standards?

Beneficial Designs continues to test playground surfaces to determine whether they comply with the requirements of the ASTM Standard (F1951) for playground surface accessibility. If you are a surface manufacturer we can test your surface material to see if it meets the moderate firmness and stability requirements for this application. Contact our Minden office (775-

783-8822) for more information about ASTM standards testing.

UTAP Train-the-Trainer Project Finishes

The UTAP Train-the-Trainer project was completed August 31, 2002. Over 50 qualified UTAP Trainers are now available throughout the U.S. to Federal, State and local land management agencies, trail builders and organizations of people with disabilities. The UTAP Trainer program provides participants with the knowledge and experience to successfully conduct UTAP Coordinator Workshops. Training is ongoing, with **the next Trainer Course scheduled for June 10-13, 2003** (June 9-13 for those not previously trained in UTAP) in Minden, Nevada (Lake Tahoe area). Trainer course information and registration forms are available from the Beneficial Designs Trails Coordinator at: <trails@beneficialdesigns.com> or tel: (831) 429-8447x113.

The project developed a wide variety of training opportunities and resources, including:

- Master Trainer Manual
- Trainer Manual
- Trainer Resource Manual
- Trainer CD-ROM
- Universal Trail Assessment Process (UTAP) Training Guide
- UTAP Fast Facts
- Information and Promotion Package
- Information CD-ROM